HMIS.INFO
A HUD Sponsored Site

October 2004   First Edition

Headlines

HUD sponsors 2004 National HMIS Conference in Chicago, IL >

Save the Date! HMIS Data and Technical Standards web broadcast set for October 18 >

The HMIS TA team is currently conducting SAEs with communities around the country >

Community Spotlight: New England Regional HMIS >

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the HMIS.Info Newsletter!

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has developed the HMIS.Info newsletter to keep Field Offices, Continuum of Care, providers and stakeholders updated on the latest news related to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) initiative. This newsletter will be posted online at www.hud.gov and distributed via the HMIS Listserv monthly. To subscribe to the hmisinfo@hud.gov Listserv, please click here.

The HMIS.Info newsletter will contain important announcements, information on HMIS events and trainings, as well as a community profile on "best practices" in the field. We encourage you to share your story or provide suggestions on how this newsletter can better serve you at hmisinfo@hud.gov

2004 National HMIS Conference

On September 14-15, over five hundred individuals participated in the first HUD sponsored national HMIS conference—making it a huge success! All fifty states and the U.S. Territories of Puerto Rico and Guam were represented.

The conference agenda included three plenary sessions, including an overview of the HMIS Data and Technical Standards by Abt Associates, a window into the emerging research on homelessness, and information on HUD's vision for HMIS in the future. In addition, HMIS practitioners from around the country conducted 24 breakout sessions. Breakout session topics included: Developing and Maintaining Policies and Procedures; Costs, Staffing Models and Funding Strategies; Engaging Special Populations and Providers; Information Security; Data Quality; Data Integration; and Operational Uses of HMIS. In an effort to keep everyone HMIS informed, conference presentations and handouts have been posted online at www.hmis.info. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend this year, we look forward to seeing you again next year!

Save the Date! HMIS Web Broadcast
On Monday, October 18th from 1pm - 4pm Eastern Daylight Time, HUD will deliver a broadcast on the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data and Technical Standards Notice published July 30, 2004.

During the broadcast, HUD staff and technical experts will review the standards, including the universal and program-specific data elements, privacy and security requirements, and discuss how to implement these standards. Click here for broadcast presentation materials.

<div style="border:1px solid black; float:right">
HMIS Web Broadcast:
HMIS Data & Technical Standards
Monday, October 18
1-4pm EDT
www.hud.gov: click "Webcasts"
</div>

Presenters include Michael Roanhouse, Director of the Program Coordination and Analysis Division in the Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPs) in the Office of Community Planning and Development in HUD; Mary Joel Holin of Abt Associates, Project Director of the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) project; Dr. Jill Khadduri of Abt Associates, co-principal investigator of the AHAR project; Kenneth White of Abt Associates, Senior Systems Engineer; Robert Gellman, privacy and information consultant; and Michelle Hayes of The QED Group, LLC, Director of the National HUD HMIS Technical Assistance Initiative. Click here for more information on the web broadcast presenters.

You may access the broadcast from:
- any HUD office on the CBAND satellite
- a steerable dish: AM-1 Satellite, transponder 9, channel 9, 3880 MHz horizontal, 103 degrees West Longitude
- Online at www.hud.gov: click "Webcasts" on the bottom left and then select the broadcast from the list.

After the broadcast airs on Monday, we would like to get your feedback on the information presented. There are three ways to provide feedback on the broadcast:

1. Complete the attached survey and fax back to Michelle Abbenante at (301) 634-1802
2. Complete an online survey at www.abtassociates.com/HMIS_broadcast
3. Send comments to broadcastfeedback@abtassociates.com

Please note the online survey and email address will not be available until the broadcast airs on Monday, October 18.

Current TA Activities: Status Assessment and Evaluations
Presently, the HMIS TA team is engaged in Status Assessment and Evaluations (SAEs) throughout the country. The SAE captures information on the progress of an HMIS implementation—successes as well as barriers—and may result in recommendations for targeted technical assistance. The information gathered through the SAE process will also be used to identify best practices for HMIS implementation and operation and to support peer-to-peer networking. The TA team hopes to conduct an on-site or phone SAE for every HMIS implementation by the end of the year. Look for someone from the HMIS TA team to contact you over the next few months if you haven't already participated in an SAE.

Community Spotlight: New England Regional HMIS (NERHMIS)
NERHMIS is an exciting model for inter-state cooperation that can provide valuable insight to other communities thinking about inter-jurisdictional cooperation. Initiated in August 2003, NERHMIS aims to provide peer-to-peer information sharing and technical assistance to foster effective HMIS implementation throughout New England. When possible, NERHMIS also develops common standards across jurisdictions, with the goal of regional data analysis and policy discussions.

On a monthly basis, NERHMIS brings together representation from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Its members represent diverse types of organizations, each charged with implementing or supporting rollouts of HMISs within one of the New England states. Some are implementing statewide, others are implementing community by community. The membership has grown and formalized over the past 14 months, with increasing involvement from the regional HUD staff and HUD-sponsored TA providers.

To support its members' needs, NERHMIS:
- meets monthly to discuss HMIS issues as a group;
- has subcommittees to explore specific issues and, if appropriate, develop recommendations for larger group consideration;
- is developing a website to facilitate resource sharing among its members and others interested in the NERHMIS model; and
- sponsors joint projects to support the work of its individual members.

Funded through a HUD regional technical assistance grant, the University of Massachusetts has begun a regional assessment of where states are in their HMIS rollout throughout New England. Of interest is the efficiency and effectiveness of training, which includes the potential of regional coordination to ensure a uniform and consistent approach. In addition, the group has prioritized the concept and development of uniform and consistent outcome measures over time.

NERHMIS also plans to monitor best practices nationally through strong communication with other organizations such as the National Human Services Data Consortium (NHSDC) and the National HMIS TA Team, as well as engage in research projects. When appropriate, NERHMIS will seek more information about the highlighted programs, and bring those models to the NERHMIS region for consideration and possible implementation.

The outcomes of the NERHMIS partnership include:
- shared technical mechanisms that have been developed by vendors and private partners to generate data (e.g. shared data quality queries);
- shared lessons learned;
- effective utilization of resources including national and regional technical assistance by HUD; and
- collaborative informed partnerships with state and federal government including the HUD regional office.

NERHMIS Subcommittee Structure

In recognition of the diverse needs of its members, NERHMIS has developed a series of subcommittees to strategize solutions, compile best practices, develop common goals and standards, and explore collaborative projects for larger group consideration. The subcommittees each work independently, but report back at the monthly NERHMIS meetings.

The subcommittees include:
- Consumer advocacy
- IT Administrators
- Policy Development
- Webpage development & Content
- Regional 211
- AHAR

NERHMIS Website

The webpage will embody the concept of NERHMIS through information sharing on HMIS policy and procedures, and will provide an interactive locus for committee members in the region and outside of the region to work collaboratively on various committee projects. The website is currently under development. Initial pages are available at www.nerhmis.org.

> ### *What can your community gain from a similar process?*
> *Technical assistance providers have seen the benefits of larger scale metropolitan, regional, and statewide collaborations beyond economies of scale. With the expectation that each community needed to implement an HMIS and several were selected for inclusion in the AHAR, these states partnered together to reap the benefits of collaboration and share effective strategies and solutions. NERHMIS presents a model that can be replicated with commitment from implementing jurisdictions, HUD field offices and HUD headquarters.*

Questions, comments or suggestions? Please send to hmisinfo@hud.gov